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FILE ONLY

Waldheim Charges 'Conspiracy' Against Him

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VIENNA, March 27 (AP) — Kurt Waldheim says in an interview published today by a Belgrade daily that the publication of documents asserting that he joined in Nazi war crimes in Yugoslavia was part of an "almost incomprehensible conspiracy."

The former United Nations Secretary General, who is a conservative-backed candidate for the Austrian presidency, told the Belgrade daily Vecernje Novosti that his political opponents were behind what he called a "slander campaign."

In a recent autobiography, Mr. Waldheim discussed only his early military service with the German forces on the

Soviet front in 1941, passing over his subsequent World War II activities in the Balkans with a German Army group that conducted brutal campaigns against Yugoslav partisans and their civilian supporters.

Since information about the Balkan phase of his military service first became public earlier this month, Mr. Waldheim has said that his duties were those of a German-Italian interpreter on the staff of the commander of Army Group E, Gen. Alexander Löhr. The general was tried in Belgrade as a war criminal in 1947 and was executed.

Mr. Waldheim's interview with Vecernje Novosti followed a day after

the newspaper published a Yugoslav Government document of 1947 accusing Mr. Waldheim of "murder, slaughter, shooting of hostages and ravaging of property by burning of settlements" in the course of an antipartisan campaign in western Bosnia.

The document indicated that Yugoslavia had sought Mr. Waldheim's extradition in 1947 for war crimes.

Vecernje Novosti said that Mr. Waldheim telephoned the newspaper Wednesday after publication of the document and said:

"I have no doubt that the documents kept in the Yugoslav archives contain serious charges against me, but I assure you that this is not the real truth."

He added that he was certain that documents clearing him also existed in the archives. He called on the Yugoslav Government to make them public and thus clear him of any wrongdoing as a soldier with the German forces.

The Yugoslav Government has refrained from commenting beyond a statement by Prime Minister Milka Planinc in Vienna this week that this was purely an Austrian affair.

Simon Wiesenthal, head of the Jewish Documentation Center here, said the document prepared by the Yugoslavs was "the gravest disclosure so far" against Mr. Waldheim, but he counseled caution.

West Germans Find Documents

BONN, March 27 (Reuters) — A spokesman for the West German military archives in Freiburg said today that documents show that Kurt Waldheim had filed intelligence reports while serving with the German Army in the Balkans.

The spokesman said that documents covering Mr. Waldheim's service in 1943 and 1944 showed that he had filled in for the head of his unit in Army Group E and had drafted secret dispatches on the military situation in the chief's absence.

Present in Antipartisan Sweep

BELGRADE, Yugoslavia, March 27

(Reuters) — In the interview with Vecernje Novosti, Kurt Waldheim is quoted as having said that he was in the Kozara Mountains of western Bosnia in 1942 when the Germans conducted an antipartisan drive in which thousands of civilians were killed or sent to concentration camps.

"I was on Kozara," Mr. Waldheim was quoted as having said. "At the time of 'Operation Kozara,' I was in that territory, but was not directly involved in the fighting."

When Vecernje Novosti asked Mr. Waldheim about his earlier denials that he had taken part in military operations, he was quoted as having said, "Who can remember everything from the war period?"

Some 68,000 people were deported from the Kozara Mountains, including 23,000 children, most of whom never re-

turned to their burned-down villages.